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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2357
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3129
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1416
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3464
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2850
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL

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SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: KYRGYZ ELECTION: CANDIDATES REGISTERED; CAMPAIGN BEGINS
JUNE 18

Ref: Bishkek 521

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Kyrgyz Central Election Commission has approved six candidates for the July 23 presidential election. The candidates, including incumbent President Kurmanbek Bakiyev and leading opposition politicians Almazbek Atambayev and Temir Sariyev, can begin campaigning June 18. The Kyrgyz government has removed restrictions on the number of OSCE/ODIHR observers, and OSCE/ODIHR now plans to field a "full" Election Observation Mission, which will include 300 short-term observers. Embassy plans to submit registration forms for its election observation teams by June 19.
End Summary.

At Least Six Candidates Approved

¶2. (SBU) As of June 17, the Kyrgyz Central Election Commission (CEC) had approved six candidates for the July 23 presidential election: incumbent President Kurmanbek Bakiyev of the Ak Jol Party; the United People's Movement candidate Almazbek Atambayev; Ak Shumkar Party leader Temir Sariyev; psychiatrist and businessman Jenishbek Nazaraliyev; NGO leader Toktoayim Umetaliyeva; and politician Nurlan Motuyev. (Note: Motuyev, who was deported from the United States ten years ago, has previously organized small anti-U.S. protests. End Note.) Another candidate, Akbaraly Aitikeev, a businessman, has appealed the CEC's denial of his registration to the Kyrgyz Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has not yet scheduled a time to hear Aitikeev's case.

¶3. (U) The six registered candidates fulfilled three requirements: 1) making a \$2,300 electoral deposit; 2) passing a televised Kyrgyz language test; and 3) submitting at least 50,000 signatures of supporters, with at least three percent obtained in each of the seven oblasts and two largest cities. The CEC disqualified several candidates: two did not make the required deposit, two failed the Kyrgyz language test, and five submitted insufficient signatures.

¶4. (U) The approved candidates will be permitted to begin campaigning on June 18. Campaigning is allowed until July 22, one day before the election.

Preparing for Election Observation

15. (SBU) Despite previous indications that Kyrgyz officials would limit the number of OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission observers (reftel), the Kyrgyz MFA informed the OSCE/ODIHR team that it would be allowed to field as many observers as it wished. OSCE/ODIHR now plans to field a "full" Election Observation Mission, which will include 300 short-term observers to.

16. (SBU) Embassy has not/not heard of any difficulties encountered by domestic organizations seeking to register as election observers. The Embassy plans to submit registration forms for its 10 election observation teams by June 19 to provide sufficient time for Kyrgyz authorities to generate accreditation documentation prior to the mid-July registration deadline.

LITZENBERGER